



LORIMER
CHILDREN & TEENS

SIDESTREETS

RESOURCE GUIDE

LARRY SWARTZ AND DEBBIE NYMAN

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**LARRY SWARTZ AND
DEBBIE NYMAN**

James Lorimer & Company Ltd., Publishers
Toronto

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Creating Caring Classrooms (with Kathleen Gould Lundy). Pembroke Publishers, 2011.

Drama Schemes, Themes & Dreams (with Debbie Nyman). Pembroke Publishers, 2010.

Good Books Matter (with Shelley Stagg Peterson). Pembroke Publishers, 2008.

The Novel Experience: Steps for Choosing and Using Fiction in the Classroom: Pembroke Publishers, 2006.

Literacy Techniques, 2nd Edition (with David Booth). Pembroke Publishers, 2004.

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INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The Lorimer SideStreets guide provides teachers with

- an outline for helping students to choose novels in the SideStreets series,
- a choice of twenty-two response activities that offer students opportunities to make sense of what they have read in a variety of modes,
- teacher- and self-assessment profiles, and
- blackline masters for each activity as required.

RESPONDING TO NOVELS

Students should be encouraged to experience a variety of response modes. Whenever possible, students should be given choice in the response activities that they will spend time with. Students can work on activities independently, with a partner, or perhaps in groups of four or five. Activities fit into one of the following response modes:

- Reading Activities
- Writing Activities
- Oral Language
- The Arts
- Media and Technology
- Language, Vocabulary, and Style

Extensions at the end of some activities invite students to celebrate their reading of a Recordbooks story by sharing their opinions and promoting the books they have enjoyed with others.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING

Three assessment profiles provide templates for teacher- and self-assessment of a student's SideStreets reading and comprehension.

- Assessment Profile #1: Reading Observation Checklist
- Assessment Profile #2: Self-Assessment
- Assessment Profile #3: My Independent Reading

APPENDIX (BLACKLINE MASTERS)

In some cases, a reproducible blackline master is needed to complete an activity. In each instance, the activity will reference the page number of the blackline master within the appendix at the end of this guide. Each blackline master also references the number of the activity it is for.

ABOUT THE LORIMER SIDESTREETS SERIES

LORIMER SIDESTREETS OFFER:

- Page-turning novels that engage reluctant readers
- Real-world issues, dealt with in realistic ways
- Believable, contemporary characters
- Diverse characters and settings
- Award-winning, knowledgeable authors

GOALS OF THE PROGRAM

- To provide opportunities for students to choose and read a complete novel independently
- To offer a range of response activities that includes reading, writing, speaking/presenting, artistic expression, and research in order to help students make sense of what they read
- To enrich reading comprehension strategies (e.g., visualizing, questioning, making connections, making inferences, etc.) through response activities
- To complete response activities that encourage students to consider the plot, character, and style and language of a novel, as well as to offer a critique of the novel as a whole
- To connect reading to cross-curricular subjects
- To make links from the world of books to students' own life experiences
- To develop critical-thinking skills by having students reflect on and review the novels they have read
- To encourage students to widen their reading repertoire by reading a number of novels in a series
- To enrich students' enjoyment of reading by experiencing success in completing one or more novels, and participating in activities that encourage personal response
- To build understanding of real-life dilemmas and issues that many adolescents encounter, and consider ways of handling and coping with these problems
- To experience texts at appropriate reading and interest levels
- To provide students with the means to experience success in completing a rigorous novel study that encourages inquiry, discussion, and collaboration, with opportunities to apply evidence-based reasoning

ALIGNING THE SIDESTREETS SERIES AND THE COMMON CORE

THE LORIMER SIDESTREETS SERIES IS DESIGNED TO MEET THE ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS OF COMMON CORE STANDARDS BY:

- providing novels that are relevant to the students' lives;
- engaging learners with multiple learning modalities, enabling them to achieve success as they complete books that respect their interests and reading levels;
- offering realistic, contemporary storylines that help to overcome some obstacles such as limited life experiences, deficiencies in abilities, and limited access to resources and time; and
- challenging students with appropriate levels of rigour, while encouraging inquiry, discussion, and collaboration, and opportunities to apply evidence-based reasoning.

Response activities also provide opportunities for students to challenge themselves.

The activities are designed to promote collaboration and organization as students write, read, and talk about the novels.

Cross-curricular applications are given consideration by inviting a range of written modes, visual and dramatic arts responses, media and technology use, and vocabulary and language usage that comply with language arts, mathematics, physical education and health, social studies, and history curriculum expectations.

Reading activities that pair fiction and non-fiction texts offer teachers a program that incorporates informational texts into English Language Arts classes and incorporates broader literacy skills into their non-ELA classes.

A NOVEL-CENTRED APPROACH TO TEACHING

Reading novels provides us with opportunities to reflect on human behaviours, emotions, values, relationships, and conflicts. When we read a novel, we are invited to step outside our own lives and to become spectators, observing imaginary events that might or might not occur in real life. At the same time, we become participants in these events as we are drawn into the story and share the feelings and experiences of the characters.

There are essential ways to organize a novel program:

Whole Class, which can take two forms.

- All students experience the same novel, OR
- The teacher reads a novel aloud to the whole class.

Small Groups where teachers form small reading groups in one of two ways:

- Members of the group read the same novel.
- Each member of the group reads different selections by the same author, or books that explore a similar theme or genre.

Reading groups can be formed according to criteria such as

- homogeneous abilities,
- heterogeneous abilities,
- social skills,
- gender,
- interests,
- random Selection.

Independent Reading

There are several factors that influence students' choice of novels they will spend time with, but ultimately CHOICE is essential to ensure success. In this way, students are given some control over their own learning.

The chart on the next page outlines the strengths and challenges offered by each approach to organizing a novel program.

ORGANIZING A NOVEL PROGRAM

	STRENGTHS	CHALLENGES
Whole Class	<p>Minimal organization is required.</p> <p>Before, during, and after responses are easy to manage.</p> <p>Student progress is relatively easy to monitor and assess.</p>	<p>No individual student choice is permitted.</p> <p>The diversity of readers' abilities and interests is not addressed.</p> <p>Students cannot pace the reading experience for themselves.</p>
Small Groups	<p>Only a small number of novels in a set is required.</p> <p>Groups can be organized by gender, interests, and ability.</p> <p>Rich, interactive response opportunities are provided.</p>	<p>Careful monitoring is needed to ensure that groups stay on task.</p> <p>Students need prior experience of collaboration within a group.</p> <p>The teacher must balance group interaction with instruction.</p>
Independent Reading	<p>Students enjoy choosing their own material to read.</p> <p>Individual needs and interests are accommodated.</p> <p>Only one copy of a book per student is required.</p>	<p>The teacher must ensure that all students are reading deeply.</p> <p>Each student's reading progress must be tracked.</p> <p>The teacher must monitor and assess a wide range of reading behaviours and responses.</p>

ORGANIZING THE LORIMER SIDESTREETS PROGRAM

Regardless of the time period in which it occurs, daily independent reading is an essential part of a literature-based program. To begin, at least 15 minutes per day should be devoted to this activity. Our students can witness the fact that we are readers when we discuss our own reading interests and habits, how we choose novels, and our reactions to the books we read. The main role of the teacher is one of guide and facilitator.

Students need to take control over their learning and should be given opportunities with:

TIME TO CHOOSE

Available titles in the SideStreets program should be presented to the students. Students should then be given opportunities to choose novels independently, with some guidance and consultation with the teacher. Some factors that draw students to read a novel include:

- the adolescent issue being explored,
- the gender of the protagonist,
- the title of the novel,
- the jacket blurb,
- personal interests,
- teacher recommendations, and
- peer recommendations.

The page length and format of the Lorimer titles are consistent. In some cases, multiple copies of a title may be available in a classroom setting, which therefore allows for pair or small group investigations.

TIME TO READ

Students read a SideStreets title by having an allotted time set aside to read the novel within a classroom program, as well as being encouraged to continue reading the novel outside the classroom.

TIME TO RESPOND

Students need to choose from a range of response activities that include reading, writing, the arts, technology and media, style and language, and reviewing the novel as a whole.

Opportunities should be given to experience a variety in responses as well as a variety of group contexts for completing and sharing response activities (i.e., working alone, with a partner, in small groups, and with the whole class).

TIME TO CELEBRATE

When students share their viewpoints with their classmates in small or large group settings, they have a chance to reveal some of their reactions to the story elements as well as to appreciate the viewpoints of others.

The process of students recommending books to peers needs to be a part of the classroom reading experience.

A LITERATURE CIRCLE APPROACH

A **literature circle** typically comprises a group of students who are reading the same book and who come together in small heterogeneous groups to discuss, react, and share. The purpose of the circle is to promote reading and responses to literature through discussion and to provide opportunities for students to work in small groups. Students take charge of their learning and improve listening and comprehension skills as ideas are exchanged. Generally, literature circles give students the opportunity to appreciate that everyone has different points of view while all have the opportunity to speak and be heard.

Teachers are often encouraged to assign roles to students to focus their attention on particular aspects of the novel and facilitate group management. Harvey Daniels, the pioneer of the Literature Circle program, suggests that students be assigned different roles for each literature circle meeting. Sample roles include:

- **Discussion Director:** raises issues for the group to discuss based on the reading completed over a period of one or two days
- **Linguist:** draws attention to interesting words in the story, perhaps finding examples of effective use of the author's language and literacy techniques
- **Reteller:** summarizes the day's reading for the group
- **Questioner:** presents puzzling issues and can help readers make connections to their own personal experiences
- **Literary Artist:** chooses an event or mood conveyed in the reading and illustrates it for the group

Assigning roles might be a good way to begin, but these roles sometimes get in the way of interesting, thoughtful from-the-heart conversation. Daniels himself offers caution, saying that the roles were meant to be used on a temporary basis until students become familiar with the routines and expectations of literature circles.

A literature circle approach may be useful with the SideStreets series. Teachers may organize the class into groups of four to six, with each student reading the same novel. It is recommended that a journal be used as both a follow-up to the discussion and as preparation and guiding statements during the discussion. Journal entries can be prepared before meeting as a group. Students can share their entries in literature circle discussions. Alternatively, students can write journal entries following a discussion they've had with others about the books they've read.

READING RESPONSE JOURNALS

The **Reading Response Journal** (also called a dialogue journal or a literature log) is a convenient and flexible tool to help readers reflect on their reading. Keeping a journal permits readers to communicate and explore the ideas and feelings that a novel evokes, and to relate what they read to their own lives. It can be both enjoyable and informative to share journals with others. A teacher, friend, or family member who reads selected entries can begin a dialogue with the reader by offering comments on their responses, pointing out connections with their thinking, and expressing their viewpoints.

When a trusted audience responds to the journal in a conversation, readers can clarify their thinking about the story, raise questions to explore further, or make connections with their own lives. A reading response journal fosters a connection between reading and writing.

Reading response journals place readers at the centre of their learning. These journals can serve as a record of the reader's thinking about literature and of his or her reactions as a reader. They prompt learners to reflect on, interact with, and find personal meaning in works of literature. They encourage storytelling, questioning, imagining, and speculating. A journal provides ongoing information about readers' thinking and learning — for students as readers and for teachers as audiences and guides. A reading response journal is a powerful way to stimulate interaction among teacher, text, and learner.

JOURNAL PROMPTS

The following sample journal prompts can help students reflect on their reading as they record their responses:

1. What are you enjoying/not enjoying about the novel?
2. What, if anything, puzzles you as you read the novel?
3. Is the novel easy or hard to read? Do you sometimes reread parts?
4. During your reading, do you “see” the story in your mind? Draw illustrations of scenes that you visualize.
5. What problems emerge in the novel? How do you think these problems will be resolved?
6. What words, phrases, or sentences made an impression on you?
7. What interests you about the character(s) in the novel?
8. What advice would you give to one of the characters in the novel?
9. What advice would you give to the author of the novel?
10. How do you feel about the way the author tells the story? Is it true to life?
11. Have you or has someone you know experienced events similar to the ones that took place in the novel? What happened?
12. What did the novel make you wonder about?
13. What do you think the author is trying to say about being a young adult?
14. Do you think the chapter titles are appropriate? How do they summarize the events of the chapter?
15. What will you tell your friends about this novel?

RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

The following activities will be appropriate for Whole Class (WC), Small Group (SG), or Independent Reading (IR) approaches as delineated in each activity

	Whole Class (WC)	Small Group (SG)	Independent Reading (IR)	Page #
#1 Page 1, Chapter 1: The Novel Lead	✓	✓	✓	16
#2 I Wonder . . .	✓	✓	✓	17
#3 Writing an Epilogue	✓	✓	✓	18
#4 That Reminds Me . . .		✓	✓	19
#5 Becoming a Newspaper Reporter		✓	✓	20
#6 A Character Journal	✓	✓	✓	21
#7 The Story of My Life		✓	✓	22
#8 Preparing a Guidance Report		✓	✓	23
#9 Reaction Survey		✓	✓	24
#10 Calling a Helpline Advisor		✓	✓	25
#11 Expressions in Interior Design		✓	✓	26
#12 What's on Your Playlist?		✓	✓	27
#13 Help Wanted		✓	✓	28
#14 A Graphic Story	✓	✓	✓	29
#15 Story Map		✓	✓	30
#16 Conversations by Text	✓	✓	✓	31
#17 This Is a Public Service Announcement!	✓	✓	✓	32
#18 Scavenger Hunt	✓	✓	✓	33
#19 Lights, Camera, ACTION!	✓	✓	✓	34
#20 Movie Pitch	✓	✓	✓	35
#21 In My Opinion . . .	✓	✓	✓	36
#22 A Novel Evaluation	✓	✓	✓	37

PAGE 1, CHAPTER 1: THE NOVEL LEAD

Novel Focus: Plot, Character, Setting, Conflict/Dilemma

Comprehension Strategy: Questioning, Visualizing, Making Predictions

Often the lead paragraph(s) of a novel provide information that introduces the plot, character, problem, and perhaps the setting of the novel. The following questions invite students to focus on the first paragraph (or the information on the first page in Chapter One).

See Blacklist Master #1 on pg 43.

I WONDER...

Reading (**WC**, **SG**, **IR**)

Novel Focus: Plot

Comprehension Strategy: Raising Questions

Students complete the chart (see Blackline Master #2 on pg 44) to raise questions after reading each chapter in their novel.

To begin, have students list the titles of the chapters in **Column A**.

In **Column B**, students list a question about something they wondered about after completing the chapter.

In **Column C**, students record whether their question has been answered or not in the subsequent chapter.

WRITING AN EPILOGUE

Reading (WC, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Plot, Character

Curriculum Connections: Reading, Writing

Comprehension Strategy: Making Predictions, Drawing Inferences

Explain to the students that authors of novels sometimes include an **epilogue** to explain what happens to a character at some time in the future. Often the epilogue provides information about what happens to a character a number of years after the story has ended.

For this activity, students can write an epilogue for a novel they have read. Students can consider the character's life in ten or twenty years and predict whether the character's life has turned out positively or negatively. The following questions may support the writing of an epilogue:

- How has the character's behaviour changed?
- How has the character's relationship with others changed?
- What accomplishments might she or he achieve?
- What talents, hobbies, or skills might the character develop?
- What job might she or he hold?
- Where might she or he have visited or moved to?
- How has the character handled the problem he or she dealt with when he or she was a teenager? Have there been any long-term consequences?

The following are two suggestions for writing an epilogue.

- Students can imagine that they are the author of the novel. They can write a short epilogue about the central character explaining how his or her life has evolved in the future in the same style and point of view as the rest of the book.
- Students can make a list of four or five central characters and write a short explanation of what happens to each of the characters in the future.

THAT REMINDS ME...

Reading (SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Plot, Character, Setting, Conflict

Curriculum Connections: Reading, Writing, Media Literacy

Comprehension Strategy: Making Connections

Remind the students that when we read a novel, we often make personal connections to the story, because it reminds us of other books we have read, films we have seen, people we know, incidents we have experienced (or someone we know has experienced), or emotions we've felt.

Encourage students to identify moments when they connect to the characters and events of a novel. To begin, students can use sticky notes to designate pages where these connections were made.

Alternatively, students can use Blackline Master #3 on page 45 to jot notes about how the novel reminded them of one or more of the following:

- People they know
- Relationships in their lives
- Adventures/incidents from the past
- Adventures/incidents that happened to someone they know
- Places they've visited
- Conversations they've had
- News events
- Feelings they've had
- Problems/conflicts with which they are familiar
- Other books they've read
- Films or television shows they've seen
- World events from the past
- Recent news events

EXTENSION

Students can work in groups to share connections they've had with a novel they've read. Group members may have read the same novel or not. As students tell their stories, other group members may tell stories that they are reminded of. Encourage students to explain how the novel inspired these connections.

BECOMING A NEWSPAPER REPORTER

Writing (SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Plot, Conflict

Curriculum Connections: Writing, Media Literacy

Comprehension Strategy: Summarizing

Tell the students to imagine that they have been hired as newspaper reporters. For their first assignment, students choose an exciting event from the novel they have read. Students write a newspaper article about the event. To prepare for this writing assignment, students can consider what section of the newspaper the story might be featured in. Is this a front-page story? Who is the article's intended audience — who might be interested in reading this story? Remind the students of the five W's of journalism:

1. Who
2. What
3. Where
4. When
5. Why

EXTENSION

Once students have prepared a draft, they can revise and edit the piece. A headline and photograph (or some sort of visual illustration) might be included to capture readers' attention.

A CHARACTER JOURNAL

Writing (Oral Communication) (WC, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Character, Conflict

Curriculum Connections: Creative Writing (Dramatic Arts)

Comprehension Strategy: Summarizing, Making Inferences

Writing a journal entry in the role of a character helps students to understand how that character might feel about the problems, people, and events in a novel. Remind the students that a journal is a medium that allows writers to be reflective. Not only does the writer record events that have happened but they are encouraged to share the thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and conflicts that are going on inside a character's mind.

Students choose one character from a SideStreets novel. Tell the students to imagine that he or she keeps a journal of the events in the novel. In the role of the character, students write their thoughts and feelings about an event or experience.

Students might:

- write a journal entry that focuses on the events of a single chapter;
- describe a specific event that the character was involved in and record the character's reactions to what happened; and
- create a series of journal entries to describe what happens over time.

EXTENSION (WC, SG)

Students exchange in-role journal entries with a partner and interview each other in character. One partner can role play the novel character; the other partner, the interviewer. The interviewer could be the character's friend, parent, teacher, sibling, or adversary.

THE STORY OF MY LIFE

Reading (SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Character

Curriculum Connections: Creative Writing

Comprehension Strategy: Summarizing, Determining Important Information

Remind the students that a **biography** is a true-life story written by someone else. An **autobiography** is the true-life story of a person written by that person.

Tell the students to imagine that the novel's main character has been approached by a publisher. The publisher wants that character to write an autobiography because of the interesting life he or she has led. For this activity, students become the character and write letters that outlines what might be included in a published autobiography. Writing in role, students can include the following items in their letter proposals:

- A description of yourself (physical characteristics, personality traits, what others might say about you)
- Important background information (hobbies, accomplishments, interests, talents)
- Important people in your life who can tell stories about you (and support the stories you tell about yourself)
- One or two significant events in your life
- A major problem in your life and how you resolved it

EXTENSION

Students work in pairs with one student playing the part of a publisher, the other student in role as the novel's main character. The publisher has received the letter and wants to interview the person before making a decision. Each person should have the opportunity to role play the part of the publisher.

NOTE: An alternative to this activity is to have students exchange letters/emails and answer each other's proposal in the role of the publisher.

PREPARING A GUIDANCE REPORT

Reading (SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Plot, Character

Curriculum Connections: Guidance, Critical Thinking, Dramatic Arts

Comprehension Strategy: Making Inferences

Invite the students to think about the main character as a student at school. Ask the students to write a report in the role of the character's classroom teacher or guidance counsellor who has concerns about the student. Perhaps he or she has requested the report for academic or social reasons. In writing the report, students might consider:

- Does she attend regularly?
- Does she complete assignments?
- Is she engaged in class, responding, answering, and raising questions?
- How are her grades?
- Does she collaborate well with her peers?
- Has her attitude, behaviour, or interest changed?
- Is there a specific anecdote or example to describe her work in class?

Blackline Master #4 on page 46 can be used to provide an overview of this character's efforts and achievements.

EXTENSION

Working with a partner, students can share their reports in the role of the teacher with the partner in the role of the guidance counsellor receiving the report. After listening to the report, the student in the role of the guidance counsellor can ask the teacher questions to further explain or clarify the report and to provide other examples and details.

REACTION SURVEY

Reading (SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Responding to the Novel as a Whole

Curriculum Connections: Reading, Taxonomy

Comprehension Strategy: Making Text-to-Self Connections

Completing some or all of these statements may help students reflect on their feelings toward the plot, problem, and characters in a novel. Students can record reactions as they continue to read the novel, or after completing the novel. A statement can be used more than once (e.g., there may be two events that surprised the reader).

See Blackline Master #5 on p. 47.

EXTENSION: SHARING REACTIONS WITH OTHERS

Students meet in groups with three or four classmates. Group members could have read the same novel or different novels. In groups, students share the range of emotions that they had when reading the novel. Students are encouraged to describe what happened in the novel that inspired these reactions. Students can also discuss similarities and differences in their responses.

CALLING A HELPLINE ADVISOR

Reading (SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Character, Theme

Curriculum Connections: Guidance, Dramatic Arts

Comprehension Strategy: Making Inferences, Close Reading

Many organizations are established to help troubled youth who seek assistance (e.g., Kids Help Phone). Also, there are radio programs where listeners can call in for advice from an expert doctor or social worker.

Students work in pairs. For this activity, one student takes on the role of a character from a novel they have read. The other student takes on the role of the support line worker or advisor who works on the radio. The character has made the decision to make the phone call and get advice about how to proceed. In role, students provide background information by describing events and relationships that appear in the novel. The advisor should be prepared to ask as many questions as needed to understand the problem before he or she offers advice on how to deal with it.

Each partner should have a chance to role play the advisor and a novel character.

EXTENSION

Students can choose one of their scenes to present to an audience (another pair, the whole class). These scenes can serve as case studies to demonstrate some tough issues drawn from life. After watching the scene, students can discuss strategies for dealing with the issues that are central to the novel. The following questions can be used to consider the issue that has been presented:

- How did the character come to be in the circumstances?
- What advice might be given to deal with the problem?
- What is the future life of the character?

NOTE: An alternate way to present these scenes is to have students videotape a conversation between a troubled youth and a social worker. These videotapes can serve as case studies to present to others.

EXPRESSIONS IN INTERIOR DESIGN

The Arts (SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Character

Curriculum Connections: Visual Arts

Comprehension Strategy: Visualizing, Making Inferences

One way to understand a character in a novel is to examine where he or she lives. Instruct students to list information that they know about a central character from the novel they have read. Students can consider:

- words that describe his or her personality
- hobbies
- interests
- possessions
- skills
- talents

Students use this information to create a drawing of their character's bedroom.

Answering the following questions might help the students draw a picture:

- What posters or pictures might appear on the walls?
- What books might be in the room?
- What equipment, souvenirs, or gifts they've received would be on display?
- What kind of bed would the character sleep in? What other furniture would be in the room?
- Is the room tidy or messy?
- What colours would be favoured?

EXTENSION

Once the illustration is completed, students work in groups to share their drawings. For this activity students can be "tour guides" and explain what is in the character's bedroom, describe what it might look like, why it is in the bedroom, and why something is significant to the character.

WHAT'S ON YOUR PLAYLIST?

The Arts (SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Character

Curriculum Connections: Music, Media Literacy

Comprehension Strategy: Research, Making Inferences

Students work with a partner and share songs and/or podcasts they are currently listening to. In sharing, ask them to explain why they are listening to these songs. Do they identify with the lyrics? Is there a particular style or genre they prefer listening to and why? Ask them what they can learn about each other by sharing their music lists and preferences. What assumptions do people make about others, based on musical tastes?

Invite the students to think about the main character in the novel they are currently reading and create a playlist of music and songs that they think this character would be listening to throughout the novel. Ask them to consider factors such as genre, lyrics, and musical influences. They can then share their lists with a partner and explain their choices. Students might also post their lists for the class to see and learn about the character and the novel.

EXTENSION

Students can choose one piece of music that they think might be important to the central character in the novel. Students can prepare a transcript of these lyrics and prepare an explanation of their choice, describing how these lyrics are suitable to the life, problems, and relationships of the character.

HELP WANTED

The Arts (SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Character

Curriculum Connections: Drama, Guidance

Comprehension Strategy: Making Inferences, Determining Important Ideas

Students become characters in the novel they've read. They are applying for a job and must complete an application form (see Blackline Master #6 on p. 48). They can use information from the novel and/or invent details that they think would connect to the character.

EXTENSION

Once the application is completed, students work in groups of two or three to conduct a job interview. Each person should have an opportunity to role play a novel character who is being interviewed for a job. Students can decide beforehand what sort of job the character is applying for.

A GRAPHIC STORY

Media & Technology (WC, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Plot, Setting

Curriculum Connections: Technology, Visual Arts

Comprehension Strategy: Determining Important Information, Summarizing

Students can choose a significant event from the novel and create a page from a graphic novel or comic book, using six to eight panels to tell the story. For the graphic presentation, students might consider:

- Which characters will appear in the illustrations?
- Will the panels show a scene up close, at a middle distance, or far away?
- How will the setting of the story be captured?
- How will narrative captions be used to tell the reader what is happening in some panels?
- Who will be speaking in speech bubbles? Will there be thought bubbles?

NOTE: If available, students may wish to use a computer program (e.g., Comic Life) that helps them create a graphic story.

Some students may wish to create a comic that is longer than six to eight panels.

If more than one student has read the same novel, students can work collaboratively to create a graphic story drawn from a single chapter or several chapters.

STORY MAP

The Arts (SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Plot

Curriculum Connections: Geography

Comprehension Strategy: Determining Important Events

Part A: Students can discuss maps and how they have been useful to them in life. Remind students that when we look at maps, we are determining information by looking at visual cues, key guides, symbols, and labels. Students can discuss:

- When was the last time you used a paper map? a GPS?
- How have maps been useful to you in the past? What are some different kinds of maps you are familiar with?
- What are some different kinds of maps you have used in real life?
- What might be challenging about interpreting maps?
- Why are maps important?

Part B: Provide students with a large sheet of paper to create a map that tells the life story of a character in a novel they have read. Maps can include words and pictures. Symbols can be used to represent important events of the character's life.

Encourage students to use any visual format to present the information. For example, maps could be displayed as a journey (road map), highlighting events that have happened at the beginning, middle, or end of the novel. Signs can be posted along the road/highway to represent important events in the novel.

Part C: Once completed, students can meet in groups. Group members can interpret the words and pictures on the maps to examine and evaluate the character's life story.

CONVERSATIONS BY TEXT

Technology/Writing (WC, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Plot, Character

Curriculum Connections: Technology, Media Literacy, Creative Writing

Comprehension Strategy: Summarizing, Close Reading

Ask the students to select an important or pivotal event or moment in the novel and create a text message conversation between two characters not necessarily in the event but in the novel. The conversation might describe or comment on the event.

Ask the students to examine their own text messages and duplicate the style and form of a text-message conversation. Students should also consider the way the characters would text, as well as the vocabulary and expressions the character would use based on evidence in the novel.

Students can work in pairs and read the conversations aloud and share with the class to give the class a sense of the characters and issues. The conversations could also be recorded or posted.

THIS IS A PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Technology (WC, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Theme

Curriculum Connections: Guidance, Health & Physical Education, Media Literacy, Character Education, Dramatic Arts

Comprehension Strategy: Research

Review **Public Service Announcements** with students: A Public Service Announcement is an advertisement usually thirty to sixty seconds in length, which is broadcast on radio, Internet, and/or television, for the public interest. It is intended to change public attitudes by educating and raising awareness about a specific current issue.

Students can view Public Services Announcements on YouTube to learn about different forms, lengths, use of tone, selection of words, etc.

Ask the students to consider one of the main social issues of public importance explored in their novel. For example, homelessness is a social issue featured in *Hell's Hotel*. Students will develop a PSA to raise awareness of the issue.

To prepare the PSA, ask students to develop a script that would include narration, dialogue, description of scenes, setting, camera shots, etc. In preparing the PSA, ask students to consider the following:

- What have you learned about this issue through the novel?
- What do you want to communicate to the public regarding this issue?
- Where might you find more information about this issue, i.e., statistics to support your message? How will you include this research?
- Where would be the best setting for this announcement?
- What tone will your PSA adopt (serious, humorous, dramatic)?
- What words and music could you use to enhance the tone of the piece?
- What would be the most intriguing image to begin the announcement? To conclude?

Students will then create the announcement by acting out their PSA or recording it and presenting the video to the class.

SCAVENGER HUNT

Language, Vocabulary & Style (WC, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Language, Vocabulary and Style

Curriculum Connections: Spelling, Grammar, Literary Devices

Comprehension Strategy: Close Reading, Evaluating Word Choices

This activity helps students to investigate the words, sentences, and dialogue an author uses in a novel. For each item listed below, students record a matching sentence, phrase, or word from the novel. Students can work independently or with one or two classmates who have read the same novel.

NOTE: Depending on the novel, one or two instructions may not apply to the novel. These can be omitted.

Once the list is completed, students can meet with others and compare their results. (See Blackline Master #7 on p. 49)

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

Language, Vocabulary & Style (WC, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Plot, Language and Style, Character

Curriculum Connections: Dramatic Arts, Writing

Comprehension Strategy: Determining Important Details, Dialogue

For this activity, students are given opportunities to transform any scene from the novel into a short script. The scene can be drawn from any chapter in the novel, but should give important information to an audience that hasn't read the novel.

To begin, demonstrate to the students how to transform prose into script form. To write a script, students will need to make decisions about a narrator or narrators, and which characters will be featured in the scene. To prepare the script, students can work independently or with others who have read the same novel.

EXTENSION

Students work in small groups to rehearse and present the scripted scene to others. In the rehearsal process, students are encouraged to portray the different roles presented in the script.

Here is an example from the novel *Gone Bad* by Lesley Choyce, (chapter 12, pages 86–87).

Cast:

Narrator

Kelsey

Cody

Narrator: Two friends have just discovered that a song they have written for their new band is considered dangerous by a group of parents.

Kelsey: It's censorship. They can't do this.

Cody: Of course they can. If people hate our music, it means we must be doing something right.

Kelsey: How come the paper didn't ask us to comment?

Cody: Kelsey, don't get so serious about this. It's just a bunch of old geeks with hormonal deficiency trying to stop us from having fun.

Kelsey: Yeah, but they're also trying to censor us.

Cody: Let 'em. Kids love anything their parents say is bad for them."

Kelsey: Yeah, but the Parents for Musical Morality are going to be on our case whatever we do.

Cody: I'll bust their legs.

Kelsey: You always revert to being a caveman when you're upset, don't you?

MOVIE PITCH!

Celebrating & Sharing, Writing, Media (WC, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Reviewing the Novel as a Whole

Curriculum Connections: Writing, Media Arts

Comprehension Strategy: Summarizing

This activity invites students to promote a novel that they have enjoyed. By stepping into roles as movie producers, students can review and celebrate the novel they have read and share their learning with classmates.

Tell the students to imagine that a movie director is interested in making a new film (or television movie) about troubled youth and that the stories they've read would make great movie adaptations.

Each student should prepare a sales pitch that would convince a producer to turn the book into a movie. The following outline can be used to outline significant features of the story.

SYNOPSIS: Summarize the story in fifty words or less.

CAST OF CHARACTERS: List the important characters. What are some words that would best describe each character? (Students may also wish to suggest actors or actresses that they think might play these roles).

SETTING: Where will most of the movie take place?

TARGET AUDIENCE: Who might be interested in seeing this movie? Why?

LESSON(S): How might this story help audiences understand problems and issues of teenagers? Is there a lesson to be learned? How is the movie true to life (or not)?

SIGNIFICANT SCENE: Describe one scene that might be particularly appealing for a movie audience.

THIS-MEETS-THAT: Which two or three other movies would this movie be like? For example: "It's like *Step Up* meets *The Breakfast Club* meets *Jurassic Park*."

EXTENSION

Some students may wish to also design a poster that might be used to advertise the movie. The poster can include a scene from the novel.

IN MY OPINION...

Celebrating & Sharing (WC, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Plot, Reviewing the Novel as a Whole

Curriculum Connections: Writing, Media & Technology

Comprehension Strategy: Critical Thinking

Students can use a class website to promote the SideStreets novels they've read and would recommend. The outline, found on Blackline Master #8 on p. 50, can be used to record information about the novel.

A NOVEL EVALUATION

Celebrating & Sharing (WC, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Plot, Reviewing the Novel as a Whole

Curriculum Connections: Writing

Comprehension Strategy: Critical Thinking, Evaluating Pros and Cons

Students complete Blackline Master #9 on p. 51 to evaluate a novel they have read. By completing the chart, students can consider how successful the author was at conveying plot, conflict, tension, resolution, protagonist, antagonist, setting, theme, language and style, and dialogue. Students rate each item on a scale from zero (lowest) to five (highest), and then determine a final score out of fifty.

In addition, have the students complete the following sentence stems:

- The novel's greatest strength(s) are . . .
- The novel's greatest weakness(es) are . . .
- Here's something I learned by reading this novel:

Once the evaluations are completed, students can meet in groups to compare results. Evaluation forms can be displayed on a class website or placed in a class binder. Other students can then read the forms to discover other SideStreets novels they may enjoy.

ASSESSMENT PROFILE #1

READING OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Name _____

STUDENT READING BEHAVIOURS

	Consistently	Often	Sometimes	Not Yet
Appears to enjoy reading a SideStreets series novel				
Attempts to finish novels				
Can choose novel(s) independently				
Enjoys reading more than one novel in the SideStreets series				
Concentrates when reading				
Focuses on meaning when reading				

STUDENT RESPONSES TO NOVELS

	Consistently	Often	Sometimes	Not Yet
Retells stories				
Talks about novels with peers				
Writes about novels				
Can respond in role				
Interprets aspects of the novel through art or other non-print media				
Asks thoughtful questions about the novel				
Relates novels to personal experiences				
Is aware of author's style, language, and vocabulary use				
Expresses opinions and demonstrates critical thinking				
Chooses response activities independently				
Chooses activities that focus on various aspects of the novel				
Is able to promote the novel to others				

Comments

ASSESSMENT PROFILE #2

SELF-ASSESSMENT: REFLECTING ON YOUR NOVEL READING

1. The novel I enjoyed reading the most in the SideStreets series is . . .

because . . .

2. I like to respond to the novels by...

	Often	Sometimes	Not Yet
Writing in a variety of genres (list, diary, letter, script)			
Writing in a personal response journal			
Writing in the role of a character			
Illustrating, designing, and constructing (visual arts)			
Improvising and role playing (drama)			
Discussing with a partner or in small groups (talk)			
Discussing in large groups			
Researching more about a topic			

3. A novel activity I particularly enjoyed was _____ because . . .

4. One way that reading the novel(s) has helped me with my reading is . . .

5. One way that reading the novel(s) has helped me with my writing is . . .

6. One way that talking about the novel(s) has helped me with my reading is . . .

7. Things that I find difficult when reading are . . .

Place a checkmark beside each point that you think can help you with your reading of novels.

- Reading a number of novels in the SideStreets series____
- Reading a variety of novel genres____
- Reading longer books____
- Working with others who have read the same book that I read____
- Working with others who have read a different book than I read____
- Working closely with the teacher to guide me in my reading____
- Finding a quiet space and time to read____

ASSESSMENT PROFILE #3

MY INDEPENDENT READING

Title of Book _____

Author _____

Number of Pages _____

1. a) When did you start reading the novel? _____

b) When did you finish reading the novel? _____

2. On a scale from 1 to 10 (highest), how would you rate this novel?
Explain your rating. What did you like? Dislike?

3. Summarize this novel in exactly 25 words.

4. Find a sentence or paragraph from this novel that you particularly liked.
Briefly explain your choice.

5. What about this novel reminded you of relationships or events in your own life (or in the life of someone you know)?

6. What are three questions that you would like to ask the author?

7. Is the title of this novel truthful and/or appropriate? Explain why or why not.

PAGE 1, CHAPTER 1: THE NOVEL LEAD

1. Name of characters introduced
2. Who is telling the story? Is the novel told in the first-person point of view (use of the pronoun “I” or third person (using pronoun “he” or “she”)?
3. What do we know about the setting?
4. What problem is introduced in the opening of the novel?
5. What are three questions that you have that you hope or expect to be answered as you continue to read the novel?
6. I predict . . .
7. How does the title of the novel help you understand what is happening in the novel?
8. Here’s what an illustration might look like to accompany the text on the first page.

I WONDER

Chapter Title	A question I hope gets answered in the next chapter	My question was answered	My question was not answered

Blackline Master #3: Activity #4

THAT REMINDS ME . . .

Use the following chart to record the people, places, and events that you are reminded of as you read a novel. It is not important to complete each of the statements listed below.

	Connections	Page # in the novel
People you know . . .		
Relationships you've had in your life . . .		
Adventures/incidents from the past . . .		
Adventures/incidents that happened to someone you know . . .		
Places you've visited . . .		
Conversations you've had . . .		
Feelings you've had . . .		
Problems/conflicts you are familiar with . . .		
Other books you've read . . .		
Films or television shows you've seen . . .		
World events from the past . . .		
Recent news events . . .		
Other . . .		

GUIDANCE REPORT

Character's Name:

From the novel:

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
Has a good sense of humour			
Has an active imagination			
Takes risks			
Is good at solving problems			
Is a good listener			
Can control his or her emotions			
Behaves responsibly			
Perseveres (doesn't give up easily)			
Is honest			
Would make a good listener			

In fifty words or less, describe this character's achievements in school.

Recommendations for future goals:

A REACTION SURVEY

Often when we read a novel, we have different feelings about what is happening in the story as well as feelings about a character’s behaviours, problems, and treatment of others. This chart is an opportunity to record the reactions you had to different parts of a novel. If required, you can use a statement more than once.

Name: _____

Title of Novel: _____

I was . . .	Reactions	Novel Event
happy		
sad		
upset		
surprised		
angry		
disappointed		
excited		
puzzled		
pleased		
relieved		
disturbed		
bored		
amused		
other . . .		

Complete this statement:

I was reminded of something that happened to me when...
 (Briefly describe the incident)

HELP WANTED

Complete the following job application form in role as a character from the novel you have read. You can use information from the novel or invent details that you think connect to this character:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

POSITION YOU ARE APPLYING FOR: _____

PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE: _____

THREE SKILLS/ STRENGTHS THAT WOULD SERVE YOU ON THE JOB

INTERESTS HOBBIES:

Three words that best describe you

i. _____ ii. _____
iii. _____

Two reasons why you should be hired for this job

i. _____
ii. _____

PART B: Complete the following statements with a brief explanation for each response.

1. If I were a colour I'd be . . .
2. If I were a number I'd be . . .
3. If I were an animal I'd be . . .
4. If I were a musical instrument I'd be . . .
5. Do you see yourself as a circle, a square or a triangle? _____
6. Do you see yourself as a river, an ocean, a waterfall? _____
7. Do you see yourself as a song, poem, painting, or a piece of sculpture?

SCAVENGER HUNT

Working independently or with someone who has read the same novel, hunt through the novel you have read to answer each of the following instructions.

Once the list is completed, you can meet with others to compare your results.

1. Write the first sentence of the novel.
2. Write the last sentence of the novel.
3. Copy the first line of dialogue that is used in Chapter 33.
4. Turn to pages 48 and 49. Find and record the shortest line of dialogue on those pages.
5. Find the first three words on the top of pages 20, 21, 22. Circle any words with two syllables.
6. Turn to the second last page of the novel. Write three of the longest words you can find on the page.
7. Turn to page 88. Find two words that begin with the same initial as your first name.
8. Record any two questions found in Chapter 7.
9. Find and record the first sentence of the second paragraph on the third page.
10. Find and record any sentence in the novel that is exactly 12 words long.
11. Find and record 3-5 vocabulary words that you think are “typical” of a young adolescent.
12. Find and record one or more sentences that paint a strong picture in your mind.

IN MY OPINION

Title of Book _____

Author _____

Number of Pages _____

Synopsis: A summary of the novel in fifty to seventy-five words.

Explain the conflict/problem of the novel.

OPINIONS :

What did you like/not like about the book?

How true to life were the characters?

What connections did you make to the novel? How did the relationships and the story events relate to your own experiences?

Did the novel remind you of something that happened to you or someone you know?

How successful was the author at capturing the life of a troubled teen?

Who might be interested in reading the novel? Why?

A NOVEL EVALUATION

Complete the following evaluation form to evaluate a novel that you have read. Circle one number to represent each of your choices. Zero is the lowest. Five is the highest. Share your evaluation with others by posting it on a class website or placing it in a binder.

Novel Title: _____

Author: _____

Evaluator's Name: _____

ASPECT	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Excellent
	0-1	2-3	4-5
Plot			
Conflict			
Tension			
Resolution			
Protagonist			
Antagonist			
Setting			
Theme			
Language and Style			
Use of Dialogue			

Total score out of a possible 50 points:

The novel's greatest strengths are . . .

The novel's weaknesses are . . .

Here's something I learned by reading this novel . . .

10 QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT A NOVEL

1. If one of the characters from your novel registered in your school, how well might the character fit in?
2. If you were to make a film of this story, what scene(s) might you skip if you couldn't feature them all? Why?
3. Why do you think the author wrote this novel? What do you think someone would learn about growing up by reading this novel?
4. What might you tell someone about this novel — in exactly 50 words?
5. What is one event that happened in this story that reminded you of an event in your own life or in the life of someone you know?
6. Do you think this story needs an epilogue to explain what happens to the characters after the novel ends? What do you think the future holds for each character?
7. Are the chapter titles appropriate for this novel? If not, suggest alternative titles.
8. Which sentence, paragraph, or section made a vivid impression on your imagination? Create an illustration that would represent this text.
9. How might aspects of this novel change if the main characters were of the opposite gender?
10. How did this novel help you grow as a reader?

This guide provides teachers with an overview of the series as well as over 20 whole class, small group, or independent reading activities activities, PLUS

- Culminating activities
- Assessment profiles
- Reproducible blackline masters

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